

brought it to-day, but has missed the likeness! And yet he was the Court painter, Signer Carloni. I have refused to take the work and am embroiled in a row, but in this country firmness is alone necessary and the Italians let you do what you like, so I've no fear as to the result. My mortification and disappointment, however, are extreme.

We have some agreeable acquaintance here. Among them a very extraordinary man of the name of Saunders. He is the descendant of one of those Scotch families who used so often to emigrate on speculation to Russia. He was the intimate friend of the late Emperor Alexander, and is highly esteemed by the present Emperor. . . . is still attached to the Court of Russia, is an Aulic Councillor, &c. He is a deep student, full of philosophy, first principles, and the study of the beautiful, but eloquent and profound. Though of a very close temper, he was so delighted to get hold of some one who had a literary turn that we have become tolerably intimate, and I occasionally visit him at his country villa, which, by the bye, is the *Villa Vespucci*, rented by him of a noble family of that name, the lineal descendants of the famous Americus. He is now engraving the most valuable picture in Italy, the masterpiece of Fra Bartolommeo.¹

Florence is not only one of the most delightful cities to live in, but is also the cheapest in Europe. Here cheapness, *real* cheapness, is to be found, for here luxuries are cheap. An English family of the highest respectability may live in Florence with every convenience and keep a handsome carriage, horses, liveries, &c., for five hundred a year. I speak here of an average sized family, as ours. On this income you might enter into the best society, and the best society here is excellent. You may live in a palace built by Michael Angelo, keep a villa two miles from the city in a most beautiful situation, with vineyards, fruit and pleasure gardens, &c., &c., keep *two* carriages, have your opera box, and live in every way as the first Florentine nobility, go to Court, have your own night for receiving company, &c., &c., on less than a thousand a year, and this with no miserable managing, but with the enjoyment of every comfort and luxury.

¹ The «*Madonna della Misericordia*,¹ now in the public gallery at Lucca.